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MEMORANDUM FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: Korean Prisoner Exchange

Our attention has been called to the possibility of reversing, in connection with the Korean negotiations, the policy established by the Americans in World War II of no forcible repatriation of prisoners. An agreement to forcibly repatriate prisoners of war in Korea, who prefer to remain within United Nations supervised territory, would seriously impede CIA activities engaged in under National Security Council directives in the following spheres:

1. CIA efforts to obtain defections from the Soviet and Soviet orbit countries in Europe rest upon the promise of sanctuary which derives its credibility from our policy in Europe of refusing forcible repatriation. The proposed policy in Korea would negate such credibility.
2. Our entire psychological warfare program throughout the world is based upon the importance of the individual and the freedom of individual choice in the Western world.

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Forcible repatriation is so basically contradictory to this underlying premise of our psychological warfare program that it would weaken the program immeasurably.

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4. In the event of hot war, our European policy from World War II of no forcible repatriation would be an important psychological weapon to induce wholesale defection and surrender among satellite peoples, Ukrainian Russians and in large areas of the Far East. Reversal of this policy now in connection with the Korean Armistice could prove expensive beyond calculation by preventing

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wholesale defection and surrender in the event of
hot war.

In view of the above practical considerations and wholly apart
from the moral questions involved, we recommend:

1. No forced repatriation.
2. An immediate census in our POW camps of those Chinese
and North Koreans who desire repatriation; a separation
of non-Communist POW's who do not wish to be repatriated
and an effort to trade those who are willing to be
repatriated for UN prisoners. The possibility that the
ratio of exchange would be so favorable to the Communists
as to make a trade possible is real enough to justify the
effort. It is quite possible that the Communists'
insistence on forced repatriation is based upon their
fear that if an election is permitted to POW's, only a

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trickle will elect to return, thereby providing the UN with a strong psychological weapon. If the facts are otherwise, the issues may disappear.

3. After separation of POW's whom we would be willing to have behind UN lines and in the event that a truce as suggested above cannot be effected, the possibility of staging a wholesale break-out from the camp is worthy of consideration.